

## REMARKS

Claims 1-3, 6-9, 11-14, and 16-20 are currently pending. Claims 8, 9, and 17-19 have been withdrawn due to restriction requirement. Claim 15 has been cancelled. Claims 1, 14, and 16 have been amended and find support at, for example, pages 6-7; page 8, line 16; and page 10, lines 5-7 of the specification. No new matter has been added.

### ***35 U.S.C. § 112 Claim Rejection***

Claim 16 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite. In particular, the Action refers to the phrase “a mass of a gel material or a mass of polyurethane gel material.” Although Applicants do not agree with this rejection, claim 16 has been amended in a manner that Applicant believes renders these rejections moot. Accordingly, for at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112.

### ***35 U.S.C. § 102 Claim Rejections***

Claims 1-3, 6, 7, and 11 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 2,706,825 (hereafter “Blakeman”). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection because Blakeman does not teach or suggest the claimed invention.

Blakeman discloses a toothbrush head comprising a flexible bristle carrier (20) supported by a part (12,13) leaving the carrier unsupported between its longitudinally opposed ends. The head and handle may be made of plastic. Claim 1 has been amended to recite that “the support is in the form of two plastic material ribs disposed on opposite sides of the central longitudinal axis of the head . . .” Such a construction is neither taught nor suggested by Blakeman, which only discloses a head portion (12, 13) in one undivided strip of material.

Accordingly, for at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102.

### ***35 U.S.C. § 103 Claim Rejections***

Claims 14-16 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as allegedly being obvious over Blakeman in view of U.S. Publication No. 2004/0025275 (hereafter “Moskovich”). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection because the cited references neither individually nor in combination, teach or suggest the claimed invention.

Initially, Claim 14 is dependent upon claim 1. As mentioned above, Blakeman does not teach or suggest the invention of claim 1 at least because it does not teach or suggest “the support comprising two plastic material ribs disposed on opposite sides of the central longitudinal axis of each head and converging in the handle toward the head direction.” Additionally, Moskovich fails to remedy this deficiency. Moskovitch appears to disclose a toothbrush head which comprises a central section 16 with sideways shelf-like protrusions 28. There is no disclosure or suggestion of the widthways-disposed converging ribs of plastic material claimed in amended claim 1. Consequently claims 14 and 15 being dependent upon claim 1 are not made obvious by the combination of Blakeman and Moskovich.

With respect to claim 16, bristles are mounted on the flexible pad of polyurethane gel as claimed in claim 16, and as defined in the amendment are bonded to this polyurethane gel. In Moskovich, by contrast, bristles are mounted on a so called “shelf-like protrusion” [005 and in several other places]. There is little guidance in Moskovich as to what these shelf-like protrusions are made of, other than [0019] which says they may be made of “hard plastic material”. But repeatedly, e.g. [0016, 0017, 0019, 0020, 0022 and 0026] Moskovitch says that the shelf like protrusions are “covered” with elastomeric material. There is consequently no disclosure or suggestion in Moskovich that bristles may be mounted on elastic material, as in the present invention. Moskovich appears to suggest only a conventional mounting of bristles in hard plastic shelf material, then covering the shelf with the bristles mounted thereon with elastomer, which as disclosed in [0026] could additionally include a soft gel-like material.

Consequently Moskovitch does not suggest amended claim 16 in which the carrier is made specifically of polyurethane gel in which the bristles are mounted. Therefore, claim 16 is not made obvious by Moskovitch.

Claim 12 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103, as allegedly being obvious over Blakeman in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,036,277 (hereafter “Weihruch”). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection because the cited references neither individually nor in combination teach or suggest the claimed invention.

Claim 12 is dependent upon claim 1. As mentioned above, Blakeman does not teach or suggest the invention of claim 1 at least because it does not teach or suggest “the support comprising two plastic material ribs disposed on opposite sides of the central longitudinal axis of each head and converging in the handle toward the head direction.” Additionally,

Weihrauch fails to remedy this deficiency. Blakeman only discloses a unitary solid head, and the only drawings of the entire toothbrush head in Weihrauch show only a similar unitary head to Blakeman.

Claim 13 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103, as allegedly being obvious over Blakeman in view of WO 98/43514. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection because the cited references neither individually nor in combination teach or suggest the claimed invention.

Claim 13 is dependent upon claim 1. As mentioned above, Blakeman does not teach or suggest the invention of claim 1 at least because it does not teach or suggest “the support comprising two plastic material ribs disposed on opposite sides of the central longitudinal axis of each head and converging in the handle toward the head direction.” Additionally, WO 98/43514 fails to remedy this deficiency. Blakeman only discloses a unitary solid head, and the only drawings of the entire toothbrush head in WO 98/43514 show only a similar unitary head to Blakeman.

Accordingly, for at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103.

***Conclusion***

In view of the foregoing, favorable reconsideration and an indication of allowability of all pending claims is requested respectfully. Should the Examiner have any questions or wish to discuss any aspect of this case, the Examiner is encouraged to call the undersigned attorney at the number below.

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